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# Security Assistance Management Advanced Training Course (SAM-AT)

By  
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Our field is just too broad and complex to “know it all.” I have worked in the field for a long time as have other “full timers,” and I readily admit my own dissatisfaction over my breadth of knowledge.

*Mr. Charles E. Collins*  
*In-Country English Language Training*  
*DISAM Journal Vol. 12, No. 3, Spring 1990*

The quote above was used by Mr. Juan Perez, Security Assistance Officer (SAO) from Colombia in his SAO Perspective presentation during the Security Assistance Management Advanced Training (SAM-AT) Course and illustrates why the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM) conducts the SAM-AT Course. The objective of the course is to examine current training management policy and procedures through presentations and discussions to identify improvements that can be submitted to training policy makers.

For the first time, the SAM-AT Course was held in the fall, from 5 - 9 November 2007. Historically, the course has been held in the June/July timeframe which excluded participation from senior Professional Military Education (PME) International Military Student Officers (IMSOs) as that is their busiest time for student reporting. After the last SAM-AT course iteration was held 31 July – 4 August 2006, DISAM made a decision to change the course from an annual offering to every 18 months. The next one is projected for 2009.



Forty-eight students participated in the Course with forty-one having over three years experience in training management. All areas of the training community were well represented.

	USA	USAF	USN/MC/CG	FSN	Industry	Other
Officer	2	0	1	0	0	0
Civilian	9	6	8	20	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

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	USA	USAF	USN/MC/CG	Other
MILDEP	3	4	4	0
IMSO	5	2	4	0
DoD	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>

	NORTHCOM	SOUTHCOM	EUCOM AFRICOM	CENTCOM	PACOM
COCOM	0	1	0	0	1
SAO	1	7	8	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>



Throughout the four-and-a-half day course, many topics were covered. Wherever feasible, the SAM-AT Course utilizes either students attending the course or guest speakers to present on specific topics. The topics ranged from legislation and policy to enactment of regulations (Leahy vetting, medical policies). There were also briefs from the military departments (MILDEPs), SAOs, IMSOs, and presentations on training automation. While each separate presentation was not necessarily relevant to each individual student, the hope was that the overall result would expand each student's knowledge. The following is a summary of the major topics discussed, issues raised, and possible solutions or answers:

**Monday, 5 November 2007**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Responder - Response</b>
Student Vetting	Mechanism for DoS to coordinate between vetting and visa offices	Ms. Porecca - Leahy vetting (i.e., human rights violation check) is completely separate from the checks that are run for the visa process. It is therefore entirely possible for a student to have a clean Leahy vetting and yet not be approved for a visa (and vice versa).
	Length of time for vetting authorization to come back	Ms. Porecca - If you are waiting vetting authorization and have not received any from DoS, you can always contact her to see if she can find out the status.
	There should be a policy that there is no cancellation penalty when country has submitted requests and DoS does not process vetting in a timely manner.	MILDEP CPMs - SAOs should let them know if they will be unable to process a student due to lack of visa . . . no shows are not a good thing. They may be able to move student to a later course or have more justification for not charging a penalty if you are keeping them up to date on the status.
International Military Student (IMS) Health Affairs	How are IMSOs supposed to handle family members not authorized on the Invitational Travel Order (ITO) that shows up anyway with no medical coverage and pregnant, ready to deliver (airlines will not allow them to travel)?	Ms. Judkins - SAO should be contacted to work with country to assume the responsibility for the lack of required medical coverage and see who will assume the responsibility of the bills. If student can not pay and country will not pay, dependents should be sent home.
	How are the loopholes/disparities in the medical policy addressed? Military members coming to the U.S. for a six-week exercise do not have to be medically screened, but a student coming for two days of simulator training does.	Ms. Judkins - If the exercise is covered by an FMS case, then medical screening is required. Not all exercises are covered by FMS cases and DSCA only handles policy for training programs that are under their responsibility.
	What is the process for the Embassy vetting a medical facility to be "recognized" to carry out medical examinations?	Ms. Judkins - the intent of paragraph 9.A.(3). of the medical policy was for SAOs to be aware of the usual facilities that are used by country and to question when paperwork is received from elsewhere.

Monday, 5 November 2007 (continued)		
Topic	Issue	Responder - Response
IMS Health Affairs (continued)	Please explain the reasoning behind requiring students on Reciprocal Health Care Agreements (RHCA's) to still have medical insurance.	Ms. Judkins - RHCA only applies to military treatment facilities (MTF) or referrals made by that MTF for a civilian facility. There are many locations without an MTF and a RHCA and a RHCA will not apply. Also, if the IMS has a medical emergency, and is not near a MTF, the RHCA will not cover that medical emergency. Therefore, the IMS needs other medical coverage.
	Are there additional acceptable medical forms in lieu of 2 standard forms or translated versions (Spanish, French, etc.)	Ms. Judkins - Country developed forms can be approved on a case-by-case basis. The request and forms need to be forwarded to her (Ms. Judkins) for review.
Tuesday, 6 November 2007		
Topic	Issue	Responder - Response
Air Force Security Assistance Training (AFSAT) Program Management	When will AFSAT be on the Defense Security Assistance Management (DSAMS) Training Module (TM)?	AFSAT, Mr. Michael - Originally, no earlier than November 2008. Update: the IT Governance Board agreed to accept the Air Force delay of the DSAMS TM (resulting from the Air Force's 26 Sept 2007 need to implement a financial policy change in their legacy system in advance of DSAMS TM) and move the target date for deploying TM to the Air Force to October 2010.
Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity (NETSAFA) Training Program Management	Limited Explosive Ordnance Disposal reduced training quotas from five courses a year of 25 students each to three courses a year of 25 students.	Ms. King - They will do their best to accommodate requests. If a country is provided a quota, it is vitally important that the student meets all requirements so that available seats are fully utilized. Also, dependents are strongly discouraged due to both facility limitations and the intensity of the course curriculum.
	Limited diving course quotas for international students.	Ms. King - International Diving Course is being developed for fiscal year 2009 which will be conducted once a year. Again, it is vitally important that the student meet all requirements to successfully enroll and complete the course.

**Tuesday, 6 November 2007 (Continued)**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Responder - Response</b>
Security Cooperation Education and Training Center (SCETC) Training Program Management	Command and Staff College (C&SC) Distance Education Seminar Program.	Ms. Douthit - Max capacity per seminar is 10 international Officers and 5 U.S. Marines per seminar (may run two seminars simultaneously). The program uses the same curriculum as the resident course: includes one five-week resident seminar, a non-resident on-line seminar, and a final six-week resident seminar with graduation with the resident C&SC students. The first program commenced June 2007.
Security Assistance Training Field Activity (SATFA) Training Program Management	Newly implemented six-day training week.	SATFA, Ms. Kearney. - This is impacting training especially for countries that are purchasing discount airfares . . . some graduation dates are changing for some locations and the new dates are not being captured in the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS). SAOs with students that are impacted are being contacted individually.
	New Layer in Mobile Training Team (MTT) process.	Ms. Kearney - HQDA, G3, wants to be included in future coordination for all new MTT requirements. This additional workload will add to the processing time for getting team members identified and MTT into country. Call up messages may be required earlier than the already established timelines: 210 days for TDY teams and 18 months for PCS teams.
Security Assistance Officer (SAO) Perspective	Can DSCA coordinate a policy on records maintenance (electronically)? Different service filing requirements.	Ms. Judkins - Advised that DSCA already accepts electronic record maintenance but they exercise no control over the service requirements.
	Can DSCA coordinate with DoD to get the academic report converted to PureEdge? FormFlow will be obsolete soon and PureEdge allow for digital signature and electronic transmission.	Ms. Judkins - She will have to research which exact office in the DoD publications office would be involved in this.

Tuesday, 6 November 2007 (Continued)		
Topic	Issue	Responder - Response
Security Assistance Officer (SAO) Perspective (Continued)	Status of Academic Reports on the SAN? Capability to upload Academic Reports into an "Academic Report Repository."	DISAM Mr. Dop - It is on the list of approved enhancements. Best estimate of completion is late summer 2008.
Wednesday, 7 November 2007		
Topic	Issue	Responder - Response
Training Management System (TMS)	No new releases of TMS unless major DSAMs modification makes it necessary. Intent is to eventually do away with TMS and have all work accomplished online in the SAOweb.	
	Course descriptions still not available for many courses.	MILDEPs - Let MILDEP know if you are researching a course and there is no course description so they can work to resolve the situation.
DSAMS TM	<p>Training Program Management Reviews (TPMRs) have been renamed Security Cooperation Education and Training Working Groups (SCETWGs).</p> <p>Who has authority to control who attends?</p> <p>IMSOs should be allowed to participate.</p> <p>FSN participation vice DATTS/ NCOICs that are not involved in the day-to-day running should attend.</p>	Ms. Judkins - Combatant commands (COCOMs) and DSCA are the main determiners for participation. If there are concerns, they should be addressed through the COCOM first.
IMSOweb/ SAOweb	<p>Concern about whether a student that is between lines of training is still counted in the "currently in training" (i.e., IMSO completes training for IMS on 31 Jul and does not report for next line until 5 Aug. On 1 Aug, does he show up?)</p> <p>Can we standardize the inputs of the IMSOs so that information is easily found such as whether or not airport pickup is available, etc.</p>	<p>(NETSAFA, Mr. Elliott - No, the student would not be counted. The statistics on the main page of the SAO/web is purely date driven.</p> <p>DISAM, Ms. Rehak - By virtue of the fact that there are specific sections to locate information, we hope that IMSO inputs are standard. But, each IMSO is responsible for populating those fields based on what they think is important. If the information provided is not adequate, you should request the IMSO to add it through the MILDEP.</p>



Wednesday, 7 November 2007 (continued)		
<b>Topic</b> IMSOweb/ SAOweb (Continued)	<b>Issue</b> In mail STL reports, rank of student appears, but not in reports section.	<b>Responder - Response</b> Mr. Dop - As we continue with the migration to the web, we will continue to work on reports. But, as previously stated, we are not anticipating any further releases to TMS 7.0 after 7.01.4 in February 2008.
Thursday, 8 November 2007		
<b>Topic</b> Global Master of Arts Program (GMAP)	<b>Issue</b> Due to reduction in quotas from twelve to eight per year, Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) are not permitted to participate.	<b>Responder - Response</b> DISAM, Mr. Sutton - FSNs can still apply directly to Tufts for admission as well as for financial aid. This has been utilized in the past with success.
Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP)	Concern that nomination in process up to Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) level is too centralized.	CTFP is a focused security cooperation engagement tool that supports combating terrorism and the <i>Global War on Terrorism</i> (GWOT). There are essentially three levels that must be cleared for an IMS to start training: 1) The country/ country team select and nominate an IMS; 2) The COCOMs review and approve or endorse the the nomination; and 3) OSD Policy gives final approval after ensuring the IMS and training meet/support the program's goals/objectives. The process is not so much centralized as it is a cooperative effort on the part of all involved to engage the right countries participants.
Field Studies Program (FSP)	Is there another mechanism for FSP dollars vice disbursing office? It is a constant education process to get vouchers paid, and now that more bases are going regionally with no local office, it may become even more difficult.	DISAM, Dr. Reynolds - DISAM has been working with WPAFB for the past two years to get IMPAC cards for FSP. It is hoped the process will be worked out in the next year. DISAM would make the process available to other IMSOs who may be able to implement similar procedures.

On Friday, 9 November 2007, issues and questions that were raised during the week were validated. Ms. Kay Judkins from Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) was present for the discussion. Following that, she spoke briefly about DSCA training program management and addressed some of the issues and questions that had been raised during the week.

During the week, students were also able to observe the graduation of the SAM-International Purchasers Course and to participate in a Field Studies Program (FSP) Practical Exercise with visits



to the Air Force Museum Annex and the Wright Brothers Memorial. There was also a class dinner on Thursday night.

#### **About the Author**

Litsu Rehak is currently an Instructor of Security Cooperation at DISAM. Her main area of focus is international training management. She has previously worked at the Security Assistance Training Field Activity as a Country Program Manager and at the Office of Defense Cooperation in Canberra, Australia as a SAO Training Officer. She also served on active duty in the United States Air Force for five-and-a-half years. She has completed a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics, a Masters Degree in Business Administration, and a Level III International Affairs certification.